



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PROBATION
DEPARTMENT

Los Angeles County Probation COVID-19 Weekly Update July 3, 2020

Juvenile Division

Testing of Youth for COVID-19

L.A. County Probation and Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS) continues to closely monitor the health of youth in Probation juvenile facilities. There is one youth in Probation facilities that has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past week and is the only youth currently in isolation for testing positive for the virus.

From June 26-July 3, 50 youth were tested for COVID-19. Out of the 965 tests administered in juvenile facilities since the pandemic began, 28 youth have tested positive for COVID-19. Of the 28 youth who have tested positive for COVID-19 (one in the past week), 19 tested positive upon intake and nine were existing youth. Once a youth tests positive, they are not exposed to the facility's general population until cleared by JCHS after a period of isolation. Additionally, all youth in juvenile facilities are provided with masks.

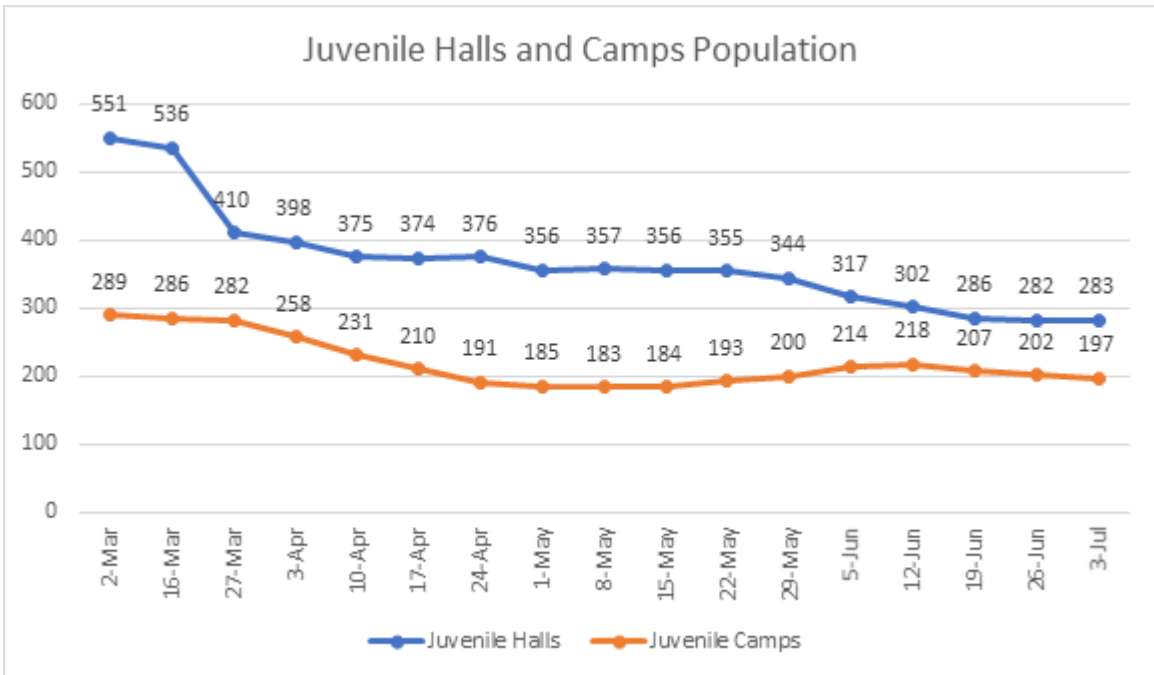
This expanded testing is part of a robust testing regimen throughout Probation juvenile facilities by the Los Angeles County Probation Department and Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS). Besides testing youth displaying possible COVID-19 symptoms, all youth who are entering and departing juvenile hall are tested for COVID-19.

Care of Youth Testing Positive for COVID-19

Youth who have tested positive will be housed in a designated isolation unit. The positive testing youth will be kept separate and apart from other youth until cleared by medical staff to return to a traditional housing assignment.

Reducing the Population in Juvenile Facilities

Over the period from June 26-July 3, the Los Angeles County juvenile hall population rose slightly from 282 to 283 and the juvenile residential camp population declined from 202 to 197 over the same period. Since March 2, the juvenile hall population has decreased by 268 youth, or 48.6% and the juvenile camp population has decreased by 92 youth, or 31.8%.



The L.A. County Probation Department continues to work with the courts and legal partners on methods to safely reduce the juvenile population housed at Probation facilities. A new warrant protocol has been developed after other jurisdictions around the State were surveyed to find other tools instead of automatic detention for warrants. This exploration process led to a reimagining of the Warrant detention protocol. The protocol was developed, vetted with the courts and stakeholders, and was implemented June 23. Warrants led to approximately 30% of detentions before this change. The expectation is this new protocol will lead to reduced police/youth contact and a significant reduction in detention numbers.

Staff Health and Screening Measures

The Department is screening every person entering a juvenile detention facility. Those attempting to enter a juvenile hall or camp at any time are required to verbally respond if they currently have new or worsening symptoms of a respiratory illness. If the individual's response is that they are experiencing symptoms, they will be restricted from entering the

facility that day. The department is also conducting infrared temperature checks on all individuals entering juvenile facilities.

Ten Probation employees have tested positive for COVID-19 over the last week. Since the pandemic began, 73 Probation staff (70 Probation employees and three contract employees) have tested positive for COVID-19. 37 of those staff members work in Juvenile facilities.

These employees are legally entitled to privacy and we will provide no further details at this time. For each employee who has tested positive, the County will notify potential workplace contacts, including other employees who may have been in close contact with the COVID-19 positive individual.

All Probation staff have been instructed to wear face coverings in line with County and State Health Orders. On June 26, Chief Ray Leyva sent a message to all staff reminding them of the importance of following COVID-19 precautions to protect themselves and those around them. AFSCME Local 685 also sent out a newsletter encouraging its members to follow public safety guidelines and the labor-management protocols for COVID-19.

The Department held a staff town hall on July 2 with almost 1000 staff viewing the event. During the town hall, various COVID related issues were discussed by Departmental leadership and a Probation produced video for staff about the importance of wearing face coverings was debuted.

Currently there are 44 youth under quarantine due to possible exposure to an individual testing positive.

Health Care Services

Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS) continues to work with Probation facility staff regarding the care of the youth in the Quarantine and Isolation units to prevent potential spread of disease. JCHS nurses have trained selected Probation staff at the juvenile halls and camps for the use of infrared thermometers on all staff and visitors upon entry to the facility. A DHS Infectious Disease specialist is assigned to assist correctional facilities. He will be a clinical resource for medical staff to help workflow and answer clinical questions.

The Department has continued to partner with JCHS to develop telemedicine services for assessment and consultation by medical staff and to build 24/7 capacity that currently does not exist. Telemedicine workstations are now operational in all juvenile halls and camps.

Staffing of Juvenile Facilities

The Department ensures that all critical security and safety posts are staffed as required by the Board and State Community Standards and in accordance with the Department's Emergency Operations Plan. Contingency plans have been developed and put in place if

facilities are not adequately staffed. Juvenile and Adult Field Operations have been designated to assist and have continued to report to the halls and camps since March 23, 2020.

Expanded Precautions at Institutions

In addition to efforts outlined in past updates, Probation has made additional efforts to keep youth and staff safe from COVID-19:

- The Department has issued masks to all staff and youth in juvenile halls and residential camps.
- Alcohol wipes were distributed to all facilities to ensure handheld radios are cleaned frequently.
- On June 10, the Probation Department received a donation of 11,000 travel hand sanitizers from Project Gratitude, a nonprofit organization.
- Probation's Management Services Bureau continue to provide janitorial services at facilities to ensure all bathrooms and staff quarters (where applicable) are cleaned daily and have readily available hand soap, paper towels, toilet paper and disinfectant. The Department has also hired additional staff to clean and disinfect common touch areas twice per shift.

All Probation facilities have been instructed to conduct additional deep-cleaning efforts in high-traffic, high-volume areas, including visiting and health care facilities. Staff have also been granted permission to carry personal-use hand sanitizer. Public Health guidelines are reinforced daily to all staff and youth of the importance of social distancing and frequent handwashing.

COVID-19 Communications with Youth

Conversations with youth continue to be held to alleviate rumors and anxiety about COVID-19. In addition, staff perpetually reinforces proactive personal hygiene practices such as daily frequent hand-washing, coughing into the upper sleeve and social distancing. Youth continue to be advised to notify staff if they are not feeling well or are displaying any symptoms associated with COVID-19.

Communications to facilities about COVID-19

Juvenile Institutional Managers are provided with daily COVID-19 updates. In addition, they continue to participate in weekly conference calls hosted by Emergency Management to share information and obtain COVID-19 updates from partner agencies.

Youth-Parent Communications

In-person visitation at juvenile halls and residential treatment facilities remains suspended. Virtual visiting is taking place in both the halls and the camps. The Probation Department is currently planning social distancing protocols for the re-opening of in

person visiting sessions when public health safety permits with the support from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and JCHS.

Surveys were conducted in the juvenile halls to obtain feedback on remote learning and virtual visitations. 77% of the youth surveyed gave positive responses to the overall experience of virtual visits they received. The youth in camps were also given surveys and 61% reported positive experiences.

Youth are still able to make free phone calls to families and are also provided with supplies for letter writing such as paper, pencils, crayons etc. The Department pays for all postage regardless of the number of letters a youth sends out.

Other Youth Activities

- Juvenile halls are offering live streamed religious services. All camps have virtual religious services every weekend as well.
- Probation camps are participating in additional programming that includes Urban Strategies, Conflict Resolutions courses, Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network and A Swan Within.
- Ceremonies for graduating youth to celebrate their accomplishments continue at Probation camps and halls.

Efforts to Address the Medically Fragile Population in Detention Facilities

The Probation Department continues to not have any youth with compromised immune systems or other medical conditions placing them at higher risk for COVID-19 infection. As previously reported, if any youth have other underlying medical conditions which might exacerbate the impact of such infection if one were to occur, the Department will work with Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS) to assess and address those issues on a case by case basis.

Mental Health Services

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) implemented virtual counseling kiosks in Juvenile facilities to supplement the existing in person services provided to youth.

School for Youth in Juvenile Facilities

Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) efforts to provide a quality education to youth in Probation facilities during the pandemic can be found at <https://www.lacoe.edu/LACOE-Schools/Covid-19-Distance-Learning-Plan>.

Virtual Court Hearings

Video Court for the halls continue to operate effectively. A youth that needs to attend court but is in a quarantined unit will not be transported to court.

Living arrangements for Youth upon Release

By law, Probation must always take steps to avoid release of youth to homelessness. All releases continue to happen in consultation with a parent/caregiver or, where none is available, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) or Probation Placement.

Juvenile Services Field Division

Juvenile Services field staff continue to maintain phone contact with all juvenile probationers and make weekly contacts with high-risk offenders, specifically those under the Intensive Gang Supervision Program. Court officers continue to report daily to juvenile court departments and citation diversion court hearings postponed until further notice.

In addition to providing supervision, staff are also helping families and youth in need. They provide assistance and informational pamphlets/guides on food distribution locations and also deliver food to over 40 families every week. Additionally, youth and caregivers are surveyed to determine the barriers for youth unable to connect with an academic program as well as confirming that the educational needs of youth on field probation are being met via distance learning.

Adult Division

Field Probation COVID-19 Precautions and related activities

Area offices remain closed to the public. Deputy Probation Officers continue to maintain contact with probation clients by phone, email and videoconference. Clients are encouraged to reach out to their assigned probation officer as well. The Department continues to conduct field visits and is prioritizing cases where there are vulnerable victims, sex offenders, and any other circumstances that are considered high risk or require special attention. In addition to conducting safety checks, officers are providing COVID-19 Public Health information and resources. Additionally, the Department released a notice instructing adult field DPOs to work with clients experiencing financial difficulty as it relates to fines and fees. Adult clients continue to receive housing support through contracts with the Health Right 360 housing services.

Adult Field Services is working with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to facilitate the release of inmates back to Los Angeles County and is collaborating with the Sheriff's Department to assist in clearing the inmates for possible release. Probation is working with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the Los Angeles County Sheriff Department to process these individuals and assist with appropriate orientation, addressing housing and other emergent needs.

The Adult Division is also doing a special outreach to probationers who fall within the vulnerable/high risk age group and may have preexisting health conditions. The outreach

is to provide information as published by the county and other subject matter experts and to encourage them to take care of themselves.

Probation's AB109 and CORE Bureaus collaborated on community outreach effort with a local CBO on a COVID-19 Stimulus Program. This program is aimed at helping individuals recently released from incarceration. In a two-week period beginning May 27, Probation reached out to approximately 700 clients and were able to refer 175 clients for the stimulus program before they notified us that they were at capacity.

Pretrial Services Bureau, in collaboration with the Superior Court, other justice partners, and community-based services providers, began the second part of the Pretrial Risk Evaluation Process (PREP) pilot program June 23. All defendants arraigned at the Clara Shortridge Foltz courthouse will be assessed for pretrial release, with the option of free services based on individual needs.

Adult Services continues to work with the court to facilitate their opening. All efforts are being done with client and staff safety as paramount considerations.

Deputy Probation Officers assigned to the Adult Division also continue to support the staffing in juvenile institutions.

Communication and Guidance to Public

The L.A. County Probation Department held a virtual town hall with Department leadership and the community May 20. To see a recording of the town hall, please visit <https://vimeo.com/421724708>.

For information or services, clients and members of the community may call the juvenile facilities. For general questions, please contact the Probation Information Center at 866-931-2222 Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

To view previous Probation COVID-19 updates, please visit <https://probation.lacounty.gov/coronavirus>.



The Los Angeles County Probation Department is committed to rebuilding lives and providing for healthier and safer communities for all 10 million residents of Los Angeles County. Through a variety of programs, community partnerships and services, the Probation Department's mission is to enhance public safety, ensure victims' rights and effect positive probationer behavioral change. The Probation Department comprises nearly 6,100 employees and has an operational budget of \$900 Million as of 2019.

SUBSCRIBER SERVICES: [Manage Subscriptions](#) | [Help](#)